

knowing that Gary's heroism and memory will outlive the record of the words here spoken.

It is my sad duty to enter the name of Gary Lee Woods, Jr. in the RECORD of the Senate for his service to this country and for his profound commitment to freedom, democracy and peace. I pray that Gary's family can find comfort in the words of the prophet Isaiah who said, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."

May God grant strength and peace to those who mourn, and may God be with all of you, as I know He is with Gary.

WILDFIRE IN NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SC

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, our hearts go out to the people of North Myrtle Beach, SC, today. As you may know, North Myrtle Beach firefighters, along with firefighters from around South Carolina, are battling the worst wildfire to hit that area since 1976.

While the cause of the fire is unknown at this point, high winds have fanned the flames resulting in a total damage of nearly 15,000 acres—23 square miles. My understanding is that officials on the scene estimate that the wildfire is about 75 to 80 percent contained at this point which is good news. Ninety firefighters from eight different departments from across South Carolina are currently battling this blaze.

It is at times like these when you really appreciate the hard work that our firefighters do on our behalf. You also appreciate the dangers. I understand that last night, two of our South Carolina firefighters had to deploy their emergency fire shelters when they became surrounded by flames. Both, I am told, are unhurt.

At this point, no injuries or fatalities have been reported and we should be very thankful for that. However, many have lost their homes. Seventy homes have been destroyed with another 29 severely damaged. I expect that that number, unfortunately, will likely go up. Anyone who has ever lost a home to a fire understands the sense of terrible loss—the loss of the house they grew up in and the loss of irreplaceable family heirlooms.

I want to thank North Myrtle Beach Mayor Marilyn Hatley, the Governor, his emergency management team, the Forestry Commission, the State Fire Marshall, the State national guard, the officials of Horry County, the South Carolina Red Cross, and the others who are pitching in right now to put out this fire. My understanding is that the Red Cross has shelters open in North Myrtle Beach and is housing several hundred people tonight.

I want to applaud our firefighters for always standing ready to answer the call to action. I pray that they accomplish their mission soon and come home safely to their families. And I pray for the families who have suffered devastating losses.

STATE OF THE INDIAN NATION

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, Montana has a long history with its first citizens, the Native American Indian people that comprise my State's eight tribes. Montana's history with our tribes, like those at the Federal level, has fluctuated greatly over the years. At first treatment was shameful, characterized by war and violence. After the wars, the Federal Government engaged in neglect, by placing Indians on remote reservations and trying to forget about them. At long last, we have moved to the more progressive and enlightened policy of today—self-determination. This shift has been a long time in coming, but it is critical. Under this new policy, we appreciate tribes as sovereign units of government and work with them in that capacity to become self-sufficient through self-determination.

One of the good things Montana does on a biennial basis is ask an elected tribal chairman to address a joint session of the Montana Legislature and present a State of the Indian Nations speech. On March 10, 2009, James Steele, Jr., who is both chairman of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation and, the recently elected Chairman of the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council, addressed my former colleagues in the legislature. I found his speech to be a thoughtful call for cooperation in addressing the current economic problems we face. It was also a fascinating description of the history of State/tribal relations. I think my colleagues in Congress will appreciate, and learn from it. I therefore ask unanimous consent to have Chairman Steele's speech printed in today's RECORD.

There being no objection the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Good afternoon.

Thank you House Speaker Bob Bergren.

Thank you Senate President Robert Story.

Thank you also to Margaret Campbell, a Fort Peck Tribal member and the first Indian House Majority Floor Leader.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in this distinguished chamber and for the opportunity to speak to the leaders of Montana, who have gathered here for this State of the Tribal Nations address.

I also thank the Montana National Guard that presented the colors. You have served our Nation well in putting yourself in harms way and you continue to serve through your community service. As United States Senators John McCain and Dan Inouye—themselves both war heroes have often pointed out—American Indians have a proud tradition of serving in the military in the highest percentage of any ethnic group in the United States. We ask our Creator for Godspeed for all Americans that serve this great country in places far away and pray for their families who also make tremendous sacrifices for the freedoms we have.

May I ask Bruce Sun Child from the Chipewa Cree Tribe to lead us in a prayer.

(Sun Child speaks in the Cree language.)

Thank you Bruce for your words of prayer.

I am pleased to introduce the Tribal Government leaders that have joined us today.

(Identifies tribal leaders by name)

Tribal leaders, I am honored to represent you today, as Chairman of the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council and as Chairman of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

Honorable Governor Brian Schweitzer and Lieutenant Governor John Bohlinger, thank you. Throughout your administration, you have opened the front doors of the Capitol to the Tribes and we have walked through those doors many times. We look forward to continuing our government-to-government relationship throughout the next four years.

I thank the distinguished members of the Senate and House of Representatives and in particular, the American Indian legislators of Montana:

Representative Shannon Augare, House Majority Whip

Representative Tony Belcourt

Representative Frosty Calf Boss Ribs

Representative Carolyn Pease-Lopez

Representative David Roundstone

Senator Carol Juneau

Senator Sharon Stewart-Peregoy, and Senator Jonathan Windy Boy

We look to you for leadership and guidance as the legislative session continues.

I would also like to recognize the state-wide elected officials in attendance today Superintendent of Public Instruction, Denise Juneau, the first Indian woman to be elected to state-wide public office; Attorney General Steve Bullock; Secretary of State Linda McCulloch and State Auditor Monica Lindeen.

There are members of the Governor's cabinet present today, as well as representatives from the offices of Senator Baucus, Senator Tester, and Representative Rehberg.

I would especially like to thank and honor today Mr. Gilbert Horn, Sr. an Assiniboine of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, who, like the more storied Navajos, used the Assiniboine language with Gerald Red Elk of the Ft. Peck reservation to create a code our enemies in World War II were never able to break. At one point in the war Gilbert Horn successfully attacked a Japanese machine gun post and despite finding his uniform riddled with machine gun bullets managed to survive unscathed. He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor but this humble man felt like he didn't deserve special recognition because he was only doing his job. Thank you Gilbert Horn for your service to this country.

Thank you all.

Elected leaders, tribal elders, ladies and gentlemen: On behalf of the Tribal Nations across the State of Montana, I am honored to present the State of the Tribal Nations address. My name is James Steele, Jr., and I am the Chairman of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Chairman of the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council.

We live in times of tremendous change, politically and economically. We have seen history made in the election of President Barack Obama and his appointments of the most diverse cabinet in the history of the nation.

And we have also lost a great leader. This past month, Crow Tribal Chairman Carl Venne passed away—a tremendous loss for the Crow Nation, Montana, and the Country. Carl was a former Chairman of the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council and gave this address during the 2007 legislative session. Please let us honor the passing of this great leader, this great man, and my friend, with a moment of silence.

The Charles M. Russell painting that dominates this Chamber serves as a reminder of the historic relationship between the Tribes and those who came west to this great country. Charlie Russell recognized that the coming of Lewis and Clark had a profound impact on the Indian people, as our way of life

was changed forever. In 1805, the economies of Native America were strong and thriving. In fact, in his orders to Lewis and Clark, President Jefferson instructed the two captains to take note and report to him on the economic activities of the Tribes, for Jefferson knew they were vibrant. Our families were strong units. We depended on each other for our survival. There was food, clothing and shelter with a strong religion and value system. An interesting aspect of Thomas Jefferson is that he had studied the governing structure of the six nations that comprise the Iroquois Confederacy and he was fascinated by the idea that there could be independent tribal governments who had autonomy from one another but who also coalesced for their common good. Historians believe that the relationship between those tribes influenced Jefferson and played a role in the crafting of the Constitution and the establishment of the United States.

The Russell mural depicts an event that took place on September 4, 1805 when Lewis and Clark's journey embarked on Salish territory at Ross Hole. The encounter between them and the Salish tribal people was a monumental event that ultimately led to the success of the expedition. The Salish people graciously provided the explorers with fresh horses, food and other vital supplies that were needed for their trek across the Bitterroot Mountains to the Pacific Ocean.

Without our assistance at Ross Hole and that of other tribes along the way, who knows what the outcome of the journey would have been. These people came looking for a new life, for opportunity, for the freedom to practice any religion they chose. They came looking for hope and opportunity, and we as Indian people hold that in common with them today. Maybe if Indian people had a strong policy on immigration things might have turned out quite differently!!

Today, we begin another partnership. It is a partnership that must be based on mutual respect and an understanding. We all must benefit if we as a state are to move forward. What is essential if we as Indian people are going to survive is that the State of Montana accepts the most basic premise that Indian tribes are sovereign units of government. It should be noted that the Constitution of the United States identifies three units of government and those are federal, state and Indian tribal governments. We are not racial groups who happen to live on a particular land base and want what other interests groups want. We are the successors in interest to those who signed treaties with the United States that allowed for Montana to be created. The United States does not sign Treaties with interest groups, they sign treaties with governments and our treaties were ratified by the United States Senate. They are binding contractual agreements in which we reserved to ourselves the rights of self-government and when the western states joined the Union their enabling acts committed them to respecting that authority. There are times when this phenomenon has created jurisdictional problems but to a great extent Montana, particularly in more recent years, has come to understand that our relationship is one of two governments that must be built on mutual respect. I believe that by carrying out this relationship in a mutually respectful fashion we can better the lives of the people who live on Indian reservations as well as those who do not. I believe that Indian reservations are good for Montana and can in fact significantly aid Montana in the area of economic development.

At this time it is important that we focus on economic development, job creation, education and health care. These things go hand in hand and our concerns are the same as

yours. For too long our people have struggled in economically depressed communities. Our country is in the most severe economic downturn in a generation. But for Indian Country, this is not new as reservations have long suffered with high levels of unemployment. The question is how can Montana help its tribes develop and how can those tribes in turn assist Montana to develop its economy? One source of information that I would ask Montana's officials to look at is the study funded by the State & Tribal Economic Development Commission and the University of Montana called the Uncovering Economic Contributions of Montana's American Indian Tribes.

Montana's reservations contribute to the state economy by purchasing goods and services from surrounding communities throughout the state with revenue generated from natural resource-based jobs, tribal businesses, federal funds that support some tribal operations and revenue from tribal assets. Cooperative agreements between the Tribes and State will improve the economic conditions of the reservations and would benefit the State of Montana.

State and tribal leaders, consider these areas for cooperative agreements:

Partnerships focused on bringing a business development approach to tribal communities through technical assistance and strategic partnerships.

Improve management skills and the ability to land job-creating grants by using tribal colleges to train the workforce.

Assist Tribes with due diligence on energy development technologies.

These are just a few items to consider in the efforts to improve the health and well-being of our communities.

The Salish and Kootenai Tribes are mapping out our future as energy providers. This effort will reach a new stage in 2015 when CSKT purchases Kerr Dam and becomes a supplier of hydroelectric energy. CSKT has also successfully managed our local electric utility, Mission Valley Power, for the past 20 years and now serves 14,000 Indian and non-Indian customers.

The great Crow Nation has taken a bold step and signed an agreement with the Australian Energy Company to form the Many Stars Coal-to-Liquids Project. This effort will bring significant opportunities to the Crow people and to all Montanans, through the creation of 4,000 Montana-based jobs, an increased tax base, and will have a vast positive economic impact.

The GROS Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes of the Fort Belknap Reservation have used their Indian Country Economic Development funds for the creation of the Little River Smokehouse. This has brought great pride to the Assiniboine and Gros Ventre people. Thank you for this important program and please continue its funding this session.

The Little Shell Chippewa Tribes continue to receive our support in their endeavors to gain federal recognition. Senators Max Baucus and Jon Tester and Congressman Denny Rehberg have also supported the tribes in their 31-year effort for recognition.

The Northern Cheyenne is delicately balancing energy development to create jobs while being environmentally conscience with their traditional values.

The Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation are proud to report that they were the first to sign a revenue sharing agreement with the State of Montana to eliminate duplicate taxation of new oil and gas development on the reservation. This creates a competitive business environment on the reservation, leading to more development of tribal oil and gas resources and increased economic opportunities for tribal members.

The Chippewa Cree Tribe is engaging in energy development on and around the Rocky Boy's Reservation that will create more jobs, generate revenue, and provide direct control over development of land and resources. The Tribe has partnered with Native American Resource Partners (NARP) to create a tribally-owned energy company for exploring and developing oil and gas resources. The priorities will be on natural gas exploration and development followed by wind energy progress.

The Blackfeet Nation is working to upgrade Pikuni Industries to manufacture materials for Defense Department contracts; and oil drilling efforts have increased on the western side of the Blackfeet Reservation. The Tribe is also in discussion with wind energy producers about several wind projects on the Reservation.

These are just a few examples—from among many—of the efforts tribal governments are making to improve the health and well-being of our peoples.

Even with high rates of unemployment, the seven Indian Reservations of Montana and the state-recognized Little Shell Band of Chippewa, contribute a combined total of \$1 billion annually to the Montana economy. Those numbers may surprise some people, but to those of you who work every day to make your home communities better for your people, these figures come as no surprise.

This is an important time to come together. It's important to remind ourselves and our surrounding communities that together, we are greater than the sum of our parts. An example of that played out when Transportation Director Jim Lynch reached out to Indian Country to coordinate conference calls about economic stimulus dollars and transportation funds. Our Nations are hungry for improvement and the tax status of Indian reservations can be attractive to industry.

In the more immediate term, during this legislative session, you will hear many ideas to help make Montana, even better.

The Governor has already signed into law Senate Bill 39, sponsored by Senator Carol Juneau, extending the duration of the Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission. I thank Senator Juneau, this legislative body, and the Governor for taking quick action on this bill, which is so vital to the economic future of my people and all Montanans. SB 39 will allow the CSKT and the State the time to negotiate a water compact that is fair for all who live on the reservation.

While there are many bills worthy of support, I must urge your support in particular for several bills that are vital in Indian Country because of their effect on our economies:

House Bill 161, sponsored by Representative Shannon Augare, ratifying the Blackfeet water compact. This bill represents a vital step in the journey towards fair and just water rights for the Blackfeet Tribe and tribal members, and I thank Representative Augare for sponsoring the bill.

House Bill 135, sponsored by Representative Tony Belcourt, funding the Peoples Creek mitigation account, as part of the Fort Belknap water compact. With this bill, the State begins to fulfill its obligations under the compact to the people of the Fort Belknap Reservation. Thank you Representative Belcourt—or Landslide Tony as some of us call him—for your sponsorship.

Senate Bill 201, sponsored by Senator Jesse Laslovich, revising the Crow water compact. This important bill allows the Crow Nation to access their interest earnings on funds appropriated as part of the State of Montana's obligation under the compact. With these monies, the Crow will be able to set up their

water administration office, as well as complete the ratification process of their water compact in the U.S. Congress. I thank Senator Laslovich for sponsoring this legislation.

House Bill 158, sponsored by Representative Shannon Augare, allowing for direct tribal access to economic development funding. This bill allows tribes to directly access the state's Big Sky Economic Development program funding. Representative Augare understands that the tribes will need to access all the resources they can to help their peoples during these times of economic crisis.

Senate Bill 456, sponsored by Carol Juneau, exempting tribally owned property from state property taxes, just as all governments in Montana are exempt from state property taxes. I am thankful for Senator Juneau's persistence in sponsoring this important bill, which is a simple matter of fairness and an important symbol of respect for the state-tribal government-to-government relationship.

I thank you for supporting the Indian Country Economic Development program, contained in House Bill 2. This program, established as part of the Governor's budget in 2005, has been a critical engine of economic growth in Indian Country, and is now more important than ever given the economic crisis.

Legislators, as you deliberate in making laws and decisions that affect the great State of Montana, let Charlie Russell's painting remind you of your obligation to include Native peoples as your neighbors, partners and friends. Let us move forward together.

Thank you.

LEM LEMTS.

GLOBAL YOUTH

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise to speak about a resolution designating April 24 through 26, 2009, as Global Youth Service Days. S. Res. 105 recognizes and commends the significant community service efforts that youth are making in communities across the country and around the world on the last weekend in April and every day. This resolution also encourages the citizens of the United States to acknowledge and support these volunteer efforts. S. Res. 105 passed the Senate by unanimous consent on April 20, 2009. This sends a very strong message of support to the thousands of youth across our great Nation who are contributing positively to their communities your efforts are recognized and appreciated.

Over the weekend, beginning this Friday, April 24, youth from across the United States and around the world will carry out community service projects in areas ranging from hunger to literacy to the environment. Through this service, many will embark on a lifelong path of service and civic engagement in more than 100 countries around the world.

This event is not isolated to one weekend a year. Global Youth Service Days is an annual public awareness and education campaign that highlights the valuable contributions that young people make to their communities throughout the year.

The participation of youth in community service is not just a nice idea

for a way to spend a Saturday afternoon. All year long, young people across America, indeed across the globe identify and address the needs of their communities through community service and service-learning opportunities. They make positive differences in the world around them, learn leadership and organizational skills, and gain insights into the problems of their fellow citizens.

Youth who are engaged in volunteer service and service-learning activities do better in school than their classmates who do not volunteer because they see a direct connection to what they are learning and the real world in which they live. Youth who engage in volunteering and other positive activities are also more likely to avoid risky behaviors, such as drug and alcohol use, crime, and promiscuity. Service within the community also contributes positively to young people's character development, civic participation, and philanthropic activity as adults.

A survey by Civic Enterprises found that 47 percent of high school dropouts reported that boredom in school was a primary reason why they dropped out. High quality service-learning activities can, however, help young people make important connections between the curriculum and the challenges they see in their communities.

It is important, therefore, that the Senate encourage youth to engage in community service and to congratulate them for the service they provide.

In an effort to recognize and support youth volunteers in my State, I am proud to acknowledge some of the activities that will occur this year in Alaska in observance of National and Global Youth Service Days:

Anchorage's Promise, which works to mobilize all sectors of the community to build the character and competence of Anchorage's children and youth, has sponsored the annual Kids' Day 3-day events in Anchorage again this year. Youth provided significant service to their peers and to adults who attended Kids' Day activities last weekend:

Students educated the public on the 5 Promises: Caring Adults, Safe Places, Healthy Start and Future, Marketable Skills, and Opportunities to Serve.

Students from King Career Center served as volunteer safety patrols.

Teens served as greeters and passed out bags, helped vendors set up their booths, and cleaned up during and after the event.

Junior ROTC members provided security and helped with parking.

Teens assisted Anchorage's Promise Board members with tours and Opening Ceremony activities.

Three teens assisted the Kids in Nature Workshop for Parents and Caregivers instructor.

One youth volunteer assisted staff at the Alaska Natural History Museum.

Youth created cards to express support for our troops.

In addition to the Kids' Day events, young people from every region of

Alaska will serve their communities in the following ways:

Youth volunteers, coordinated by Covenant House, will bring attention to the importance of conservation, recycling, and educate youth about Earth Day.

Various youth service projects will be performed by Juneau youth at local nonprofits.

Members of the Eagle River Boys & Girls Club provided "kid power" to fill 3000 Easter eggs.

The Eielson Air Force Base Youth Programs' Inside & Out Club will clean to make it shine as much as the kids do.

Youth volunteers, coordinated by the Anchorage Public Library, will help organize summer reading celebration materials.

Youth at Chugiak High School have produced and will show a docudrama that simulates a drunk driving collision and help educate their peers about the dangers of drunk driving.

Students at Steller Secondary School will provide the Covenant House residents with gift bags containing personal hygiene products.

Alaska Youth and Family Network volunteers will promote personal responsibility for wellness that focuses on youth with behavioral health problems.

Spirit of Youth volunteers from all across Alaska, including Thorne Bay, Ketchikan, Eagle River, Kodiak, Anchorage, Palmer, Juneau, Cantwell, Kasaan, Nenana, Nome, Shageluk, Cordova, Palmer, and Chugiak, will work with their peers and adults on projects as varied as sharing their artistic talents; organizing a potato feed fundraiser to help the local library; running a girls' study group; offering free babysitting, teaching Sunday school, and helping the elderly at the local hospital; raising money for youth activities and easing community tensions; improving the collective well-being of youth; including people with disabilities in social activities; teaching cheerleading and dance skills; coordinating canned food drives; honoring Haida culture through art and music; working with Native elders to retain Alaska Native boat making skills; responding to emergencies; restoring salmon habitat; learning about climate change and fire science; owning, operating, and crewing a seine fishing boat; giving teens a forum to discuss political issues; educating others about child labor; helping other youth to succeed in realizing their dreams; helping students with disabilities excel in physical education; and educating the public about domestic violence while advocating for justice and change.

The Alaska Teen Media Institute will provide teens with the tools and training needed to produce their own stories told in their own voices to be shared through a variety of media.

Members of the Mountain View Boys & Girls Club will kick off Mountain View Clean-up Day.